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### **Peters Receives U of M Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award**

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# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MORRIS

## Peters receives U of M Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion award

(November 22, 2023) Associate Professor of Psychology Heather Peters has been named a recipient of the University of Minnesota's 2023 Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Award. The award honors faculty who have done significant research, teaching, or service/leadership to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion at the University, in the person's field of study, or in the broader community. Peters was honored at the Equity and Diversity Breakfast on Wednesday, Nov. 15.



Peters has been a tireless advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion at UMN Morris. On campus, her leadership has been essential to the creation of the human services social justice major, the Equity and Diversity Advocate program, the Morris 1101 Multicultural Knowledge module, and the new pre-licensed alcohol and drug counselor program. In the classroom, Peters supports the development of students' multicultural knowledge, awareness, and skills, so they can actively work to create a society in which people are included, respected, and valued. Beyond campus, she facilitated Otter Tail County's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workgroup and supported Horizon Public Health's efforts to improve health equity in its five-county service area.

Peters' research has helped develop and provide culturally sensitive interventions, programs, and services that support people and communities experiencing marginalization. For example, Peters' partnership with Dakota Wicoŋ'an, a Native nonprofit organization dedicated to revitalizing Dakota language and life ways, has secured external funding to promote health and well-being in Dakota communities.

In their nomination letter, Peh Ng, acting vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean, along with Arne Kildegard, interim chair, Division of Social Science, cited Peters' remarkable track record that includes over 16 years at UMN Morris—a span of time over which the diversity of UMN Morris's student body has increased dramatically. "Peters' energetic, intelligent attention to this transition has raised the consciousness of the entire institution, and helped us evolve and adapt in constructive and appropriate ways that help us serve the students of today. Bridging

teaching and research, Dr. Peters has mentored 91 undergraduate research assistants during her time at UMN Morris, involving them in a variety of projects. It is hard to overstate the impact this has had on our students.”

JEDI awards intend to advance and elevate equity work; provide funding in recognition of the value of that work; and showcase critical scholarship, pedagogy, and community engagement. Recipients receive a one-time \$10,000 award to support their work in justice, equity, and diversity and inclusion.